



PARTNERS IN FLIGHT NEWSLETTER

<http://www.partnersinflight.org>

July 2004

North American Landbird Conservation Plan Going Fast

Over 7000 of the 10,000 copies of the PIF Continental Plan have been distributed and orders continue to roll in. As a reminder, boxes of plans have been distributed to: each USFWS regional office, each USFS regional office, the USFS Washington office, DOD-PIF, the National Park Service, the Canadian Wildlife Service, Bird Studies Canada, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, IAFWA, certain states (AZ, CO, ID, KY, NJ, NV, TX), Ducks Unlimited, the American Bird Conservancy, the National Audubon Society IBA program, the Playa Lakes and Sonoran JVs, Plum Creek Timber Company, and Weyerhaeuser Company.

We are sending 1-5 copies to any requester free of charge. But as we still need to recover some of the costs of publication, we are requesting donations of \$10 per plan for orders of more than 5 plans. But we will not let ability to pay stand in the way of getting these plans out there. Everyone who can use a copy will get a copy.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Continental Objectives for States and BCRs

At the request of IAFWA, Ken Rosenberg and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology has produced a guide for each state that steps down priorities and objectives found in the PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan. The intent of each state report is to summarize the detailed information from PIF bird conservation plans that is most relevant to state planners and biologists as they develop their Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies. Each report has two parts—Part I is a user's guide that explains the standardized set of procedures and assumptions used to develop the data and information for each state. Part II has the actual data and information. The latter includes:

- priority species for each state, based on the PIF continental and physiographic area planning process;
- population estimates for each state, broken into portions of Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) within each state;
- population objectives and numerical targets for each priority species, based on methods defined in the PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan; and

a cross-referenced list of where relevant conservation issues, management recommendations, research and monitoring needs are found in the physiographic area and state PIF plans.—Debbie Hahn (dhahn@sso.org)

Coordinated Bird Monitoring

The complex goal of establishing coordinated bird monitoring in North America continues to make progress on a number of fronts. Recently, the PIF Science Committee met to provide species-specific detail to meeting the long- and short-term monitoring needs for those landbird species identified in the Continental Plan as not adequately monitored. A matrix will be available for review following internal review by the Science Committee.—Jon Bart (jon_bart@usgs.gov)

Species Assessment in Mexico

All regional workshops for the assessment of the Mexican avifauna have now been completed. Mexican ornithologists will meet sometime this fall to reconcile possible differences in regional scores, and members of the PIF Science Committee will join them to discuss how the North American Landbird Conservation Plan will need to be adjusted to accommodate Mexican species and issues.—Eduardo E. Iñigo-Elias (eei2@cornell.edu)

La Tangara Now Online in pdf Format

Hoping to make the reception of La Tangara more convenient, starting in April 2004, La Tangara has been made available in PDF format on the web page www.latangara.org. Please take the opportunity to see the new web page, and also verify your information in the database of La Tangara readers. If you are not currently subscribed, please fill out the subscription form.—Jose M. Zolotoff-Pallais (tangara@ibw.com.ni)

New Cuban Trogon T-shirt Available

Cuba's national bird is now available on a beautiful new t-shirt. The artwork was painted by Nils Navarro on commission from Optics for the Tropics, Inc. Shirts can be obtained for a tax-deductible donation of \$25 or more. The goal of OFTT is to provide quality optical equipment in the Caribbean and Latin America. We distribute equipment to ornithologists and educators working to further bird conservation. See www.opticsforthetropics.org for details.—Joni Ellis (joni@OPTICSFORTHETROPICS.ORG)

Wetland Reserve Program Pilot

PIF will be participating in a pilot project to develop guidance for the compatible use of Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) grasslands. The goal of the pilot will be to develop a separate table for each PIF physiographic area that provides guidance to managers regarding the compatibility of proposed activities in WRP

easements. Tables developed for each of the physiographic areas in the pilot area will contain the following three pieces of information: 1) list of bird species of greatest conservation interest in the region, 2) activities taking place on easements in the region (e.g., haying, grazing, mowing, food plots, timber harvest, etc.), and 3) responses by priority species to those activities. This is another step in the PIF goal of integrating landbird objectives into the programs of other partners. —Terry Rich

Breeding Bird Survey Involvement Needed

The BBS is the largest and longest running multi-species monitoring program for terrestrial species in North America. The value of BBS data is demonstrated by the continual outpouring of planning documents and peer-reviewed publications that use, not only BBS trend information, but also its relative abundance data. Despite the critical importance of this monitoring program, every year many BBS routes are not run. We have learned that even within resource agencies, certain offices may not support the participation of their capable, professional staff. As a result, Partners in Flight, the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, and the American Bird Conservancy are developing an outreach strategy with the goal of seeing that all BBS routes are run every year. If you are a good birder (or supervise a good birder) who is not doing at least one BBS route every year, we need you!—Terry Rich

Species Assessment Database Funding Sought

Following strong endorsement by the Partners in Flight Council of the effort to secure permanent funding for the PIF Species Assessment Database, PIF has worked with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and other partners to secure a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for this work. This database has been the foundation for PIF Bird Conservation Plans, for the PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan, has been an important source of information for the Birds of Conservation Concern list, and has been used by the National Audubon Society and American Bird Conservancy for their Watch List and Green List, respectively.

The basic need is to hire a full-time database manager who can keep up with the increasing flow of data and the increasing requests for information. The web site is currently getting 2000 hits per week and that will only go up as more information – global and step-down population estimates, for example – is added. Non-federal matching funds are sought.—Terry Rich

Landbird Population Estimates Peer Review

As a result of great interest in PIF's estimation of global population sizes for 448 species of landbirds, PIF held a peer-review workshop on 4-5 May 2004 in La Crosse, WI to examine methods for landbird population estimation. The

workshop was sponsored by USGS and included invited scientists from USGS, academia, U.S. Forest Service Research, Canadian Wildlife Service, and states. The review was very constructive. Products will include a set of recommendations to the PIF Science Committee and a pair of papers to be submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed conservation or ornithological journal.—Terry Rich

NAWCA Technical Question 3

The PIF Science Committee has been working with the North American Wetlands Conservation Council to produce maps to help address geographic priorities for wetland-associated landbirds. The current map follows the pattern of maps in the PIF Continental Plan by showing priorities by lat-long block. Weighting factors for each block include: 1) mean Area Importance score, 2) number of species on both the PIF Watch List and the NAWCA list for a given BCR, and 3) mean vulnerability score for species at that geographic location. The most critical piece of information in the system is the list of wetlands-associated species identified for each BCR. These lists and the best way to portray the multi-species value of a given site are being reviewed.—Terry Rich

Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Awardees

Congress appropriated \$4 million for the NMBCA for FY 2004. Following the 16 January 2004 deadline, the FWS received 139 proposals. Of these, 40 projects were selected for funding from the US and 20 countries from throughout the Western Hemisphere. These grants will conserve migratory bird habitat, further research and monitoring efforts, support law enforcement, and develop community outreach and education initiatives. The \$4 million in federal funds is being matched by \$16 million in partner funds. Successful proposals can be viewed at birdhabitat.fws.gov/NMBCA/projectsNar.htm.—Doug Ryan (neotropical@fws.gov)

NAWCA Small Grants Program Makes Awards

On 9 June 2004, the North American Wetlands Conservation Council reported to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, identifying 43 projects in 22 states and Puerto Rico that it had approved for funding under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act's Small Grants Program. Project partnerships received a total of \$1.9 million in grants to conserve nearly 12,000 acres of wetland and associated upland habitats. Partners' contributions to the projects amounted to more than \$11 million. Project Flash links, describing projects funded in each state, and a Small Grants Summary Table, summarizing project information, arrayed by state, may be accessed at birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/projects/USprojects/smallgrants060904/USsmallgrantsprojects.html.

Birders and the Federal Duck Stamp

The USFWS has recently put up a new page on their site for the Federal Duck Stamp, a page addressed at concerned and responsible birders. It reiterates why birders should participate in the Stamp program, and it delivers the message - from their point of view - very well. As you may know, the official name of the Stamp is "The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp." It should be appreciated as such. Purchase of the Stamp, of course, supports the Refuge System and bird conservation. Remember, the Stamp is also a bargain, essentially a "\$15-annual pass" for all Federal refuges that charge an entrance fee. The new stamp became available in the first week of July, so this is a very good time to see what the USFWS is saying to birders on this subject. Visit duckstamps.fws.gov/Info/Constituents/ birder.htm for details.--Paul Baicich (paul.baicich@swarovskibirding.com)

Cats Indoors!

Our Education Kit Fact Sheets have been extensively revised and can now be downloaded from www.abcbirds.org/cats. These fact sheets contain information on recent scientific studies of cat predation on wildlife, hazards to free-roaming cats, getting a cat ordinance passed, dealing with neighbors' cats in your yard, converting an outdoor cat to an indoor cat, and "managed" cat colonies.

Children's Poster Competition winners for 2004 can be viewed at www.abcbirds.org/cats/2004_winners. The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources conducted a state-wide poster competition this year and submitted the 3 winning posters. We also received many excellent posters from local competitions in Florida and Arizona, along with the state-wide competition sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Nongame Wildlife Program. Winning posters from the MN competition can be viewed at www.dnr.state.mn.us/contests/catposter_statewinners.

Cats Indoors! Yahoo Group - If you would like to join a group of like-minded people working to encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors--through legislative action or public education--send an email to KeepCatsIndoors-subscribe@yahoogroups.com This email discussion group is being managed by a volunteer based in Oregon for mutual encouragement and ideas, and is not affiliated with ABC.—Linda Winter (lwinter@abcbirds.org)

Bird Without an Equal

The Georgia Painted Bunting (www.pwrc.usgs.gov/pabu/painted/) web site is now online with lots of information (many photos, maps linked with Flash programming, story of decline, management guidelines, hope for the future, and links). The site should load on phone lines very quickly as it uses powerful web software.—J. Michael Meyers (jmeyers@smokey.forestry.uga.edu)

Northern Great Plains Joint Venture

The Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, USFWS, is soliciting review of the Implementation Plan for the Northern Great Plains Joint Venture. Several PIF partners have agreed to provide comments on the plan. The Service is particularly interested in additional considerations that clearly articulate a science-based process by which the Plan can significantly contribute to the range-wide, continental, and national objectives of various bird conservation plans and agency or NGO programs.—Terry Rich

Texas Bird Checklists

Ecoregional bird checklists in Texas by Bird Conservation Region are now available online as PDF files on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's web site (www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/birding/partners_in_flight/checklists/). Two BCRs are not completed yet (South Texas Brushlands and Coastal Prairies), but the remainder in Texas can be found at the above site.

A revised edition of the Texas Ornithological Society's Checklist to the Birds of Texas also has been printed. This edition includes 100 photos and range maps. For details, see www.tamu.edu/upress/BOOKS/2004/lockwood.htm.—Clifford Shackelford (Clifford.Shackelford@tpwd.state.tx.us)

All-Bird Bulletin

Inside the June 2004 issue of The All-Bird Bulletin you will find:

- Secretary of Interior Norton Announces 40 "Neotrop Projects" in 2004
- Minnesota Hatches All-Bird Conservation Initiative
- Central Valley Joint Venture Updates Implementation Plan
- US Geological Survey Develops Tools for Bird Conservation Planning

Visit www.nabci-us.org/news.html to download this and back issues of The All-Bird Bulletin.—Roxanne Bogart (Roxanne_Bogart@fws.gov)

MEETINGS

Reminder – I am making a concerted effort to ensure that we have all the pertinent PIF meetings listed here and on the PIF web site. Be sure to send me your meeting announcements 3-6 months or longer ahead of time.

State Wildlife Strategies "One Year Out" Conference

Registration information is now available for the State Wildlife Strategies "One Year Out" Conference at the Lied Lodge and Conference Center in Nebraska City, NE, August 2-4, 2004. This very important conference will bring together wildlife strategy coordinators from the states and territories, along with partner agencies and organizations, to share ideas, exchange information and products,

and develop approaches to common challenges. An early head count will make it easier for us to continue planning the details of this meeting. Please contact Liz Skipper (lskipper@sso.org) immediately if you are thinking about attending this conference.

Southeastern Quail Study Group

The 10th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Quail Study Group will be held 2-5 August 2004, in Morrilton, Arkansas. This meeting will focus on continued implementation of the Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative, with topics including the standardization of monitoring habitat changes and quail response, state initiative updates, current research and committee reports, progress and discussion on joint work with SE PIF to develop, advocate, achieve, and implement a new private-land habitat initiative through the Farm Bill. For more information, contact Brad Carner (1-800-364-4263 x 6395).

Fourth Important Bird Areas Conference

The Fourth Important Bird Areas Conference has been set for 11-15 August 2004 in Sierra Vista, Arizona. The conference will focus on five themes:

- IBA criteria at the continental and global levels
- The new and enhanced IBA database
- Conservation planning for IBAs
- Monitoring at IBAs
- IBAs throughout the hemisphere

For further information, contact Connie Sanchez (csanchez@audubon.org).

California PIF

The next statewide California Partners in Flight meeting will take place 20-21 August 2004 at the Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary in Orange County. The focus of this meeting is the conservation and management of coastal scrub and chaparral birds and habitats. Meeting space is limited, so I encourage you to register early. Visit www.prbo.org/calpif/meetings.html for registration information and meeting details.—Kim Kreitinger

Midwest Regional Working Group

The PIF Midwest Regional Working Group will hold a Midwest Regional Workshop 15-18 September 2004, at Crex Meadows Wildlife Area near Grantsburg, Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI) will host the meeting. In addition to arranging for free accommodations and helping to develop an action-packed agenda, WBCI also promises an exciting spectacle of autumn migration on the extensive sedge meadows and wetlands at Crex, in select specialty northern forest habitats, and at the fabled migrant traps of Wisconsin Point.

The focus of the workshop will be:

- to move forward with the action items developed at the December 2003 Midwest Working Group meeting;
- to develop a regional strategy for implementing the PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan;
- to engage participants in detailed work groups to accomplish portions of the Stepping Forward and Five Elements implementation process outlined in February 2004 at Port Aransas, Texas; and
- to develop a framework for a regional coordinated bird monitoring plan.

Agenda and logistic details will follow shortly on the Midwest PIF ListServ.—Andy Paulios (Andy.Paulios@DNR.STATE.WI.US)

Next National Partners in Flight Meetings

The next national PIF Implementation Committee meeting will be held on 26-27 September 2004 prior to the annual conference of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Atlantic City, NJ (www.iafwa.org/). The exact meeting location is still being worked out. Details will be distributed via the listserv as soon as they are finalized. As always, we are eager to have participation by anyone interested in contributing to the direction of Partners in Flight. Other PIF and related committee meetings of interest are posted on the IAFWA meeting web site.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Western Working Group

The PIF WWG will meet on 6-8 October 2004 in Pacific City, Oregon. This site is on the Central Oregon Coast between Tillamook and Lincoln City and is about 2 hours from Portland. There are a couple of themes we are working on for the workshop: 1) continuing to work on providing a forum for shorebird, waterbird and waterfowl coordination, perhaps with a focus on shorebirds, and 2) selecting several high priority landbird species in the West and working through the objectives by state that folks have been coming up with and compiling them across their range. This meeting coincides with a major pelagic trip on 9 October out of Newport, OR, which is about 45 minutes south of our meeting location. If interested in this field trip, see thebirdguide.com/pelagics/premier.htm. For meeting details, watch the WWG listserv.—Carol Beardmore (Carol_Beardmore@fws.gov) and Bob Altman (baltman@abcbirds.org)

Association of State Wetland Managers 2004 National Symposium

The ASWM is hosting "Wetlands 2004: Wetlands and Migratory Birds: Protecting and Restoring Wetlands of International Significance" 19-20 October 2004 at the Hilton Kansas City Airport in Kansas City, Missouri. This will be followed up by a

field seminar on 21-22 October. Visit the ASWM web site (www.aswm.org/) for details.

Southeastern PIF Steering Committee

The Southeastern PIF Steering Committee will meet some time during the annual conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on 30 October - 3 November 2004, at Hilton Head, SC. For more information contact SE PIF Co-chairs Catherine Rideout (cwrideout@agfc.state.ar.us) or Laurel Moore Barnhill (lamoores@fs.fed.us).

PIF Mesoamerican Meeting

We continue to make plans for a PIF Mesoamerican meeting in conjunction with the Mesoamerican Society for Conservation and Biology (MSCB) in Managua on 15-19 November 2004. This will be a meeting to identify and prioritize needs while building links with the MSCB, the Western Hemisphere Conference, the Austral and Neotropical Section of the Society for Conservation Biology, the Mesoamerican Corridor Project, and BirdLife's IBA program. Jose Manuel Zolotoff has the lead for the agenda and for logistical arrangements. George Wallace and Megan Hill continue as co-chairs of the PIF International Working Group. If you have ideas for this meeting, please share them with the group or with individuals, as appropriate. Make plans to participate in this important opportunity to build our network south.—Terry Rich

Southeast PIF

The next Southeast Partners in Flight meeting will be held in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas on 16-19 February 2005. The hub will likely be McAllen. The meeting will include sneak-peeks at the forthcoming World Birding Center and post-meeting field trips in the area. Details will be posted to the SE PIF listserv as they develop.

The next newsletter will be issued on 1 October 2004. Items are due 15 September 2004 to Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov) by e-mail only. Please put "Newsletter Item" in the subject line.